

MINUTES

OF THE

Thirty-third Annual Session,

OF THE

North River Baptist Association,

HELD WITH SHEPHERD CHURCH,

Fayette County Alabama,

ON THE

21st and 23d days of September, 1867.

Watchman Print, Fayette C. H., Ala.

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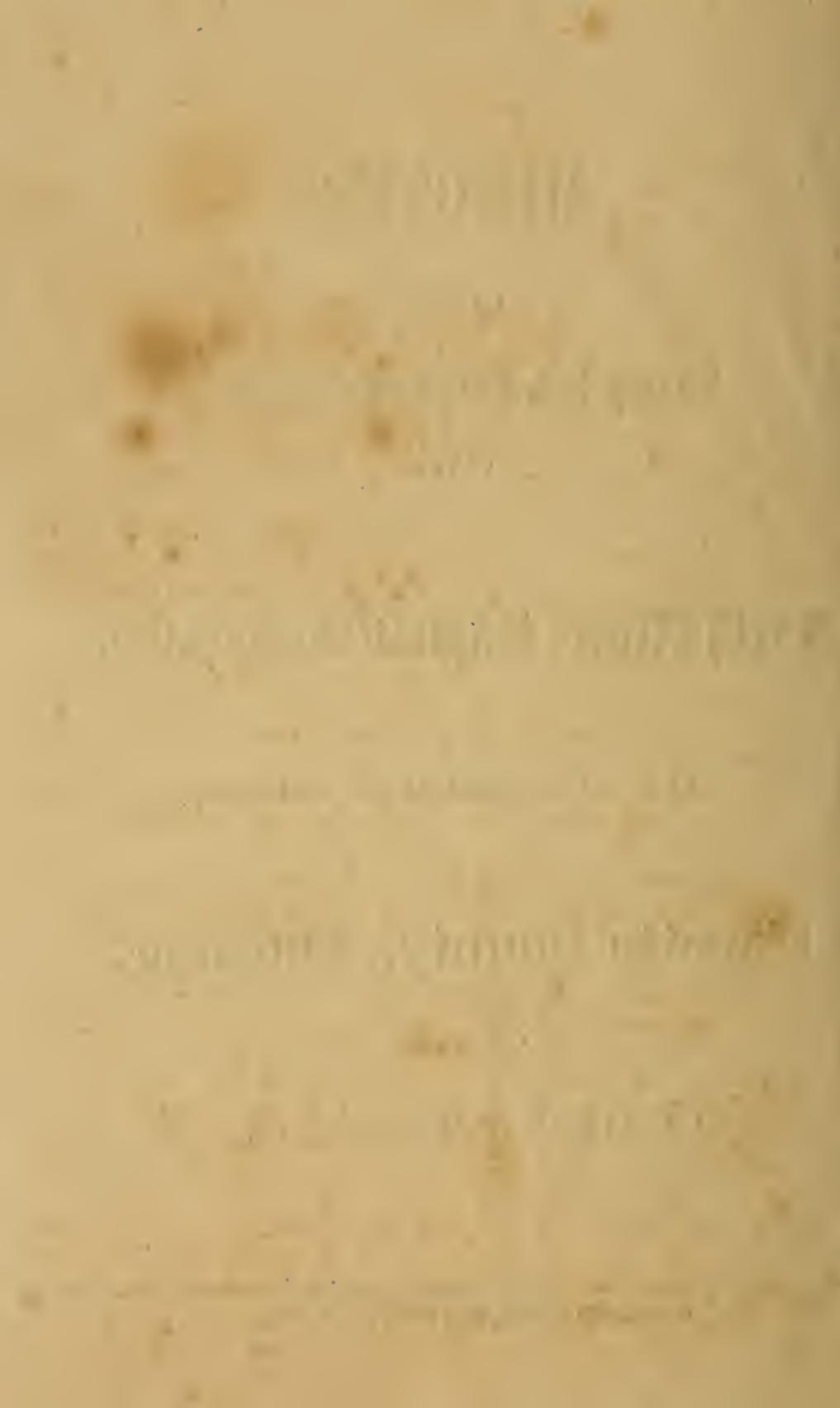
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MINUTES.

1. The delegates from the several Churches composing the North River Baptist Association, met at Shepherd Church, Fayette county, Ala., on Saturday before the fourth Sabbath in September, 1867.

The introductory sermon was preached by Elder C. Manly, of the Tuscaloosa Association, from the 18th verse, 18th chap. of Mathew: "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

2. After half an hour's intermission, the delegates assembled in the Meeting-house, and the Association was called to order by the former Moderator, and prayer offered by Elder D. Manasco.

3. Called for the letters from the Churches, which were read and the names of the delegates enrolled as follows:

CHURCHES.

DELEGATES.

Fayetteville—A. M. Nuckols, M. Walters, A. F. Bell.

Shepherd—Elder T. A. Brent, T. Blakney, John Savage.

Pilgrim's Rest—H. Yerby, E. D. Rushing, G. W. Horn, W. E. Cain.

New Bethel—G. W. Kincannon, W. Fowler, James Freeman.
Mount Pleasant—Elder J. C. Jones, W. L. Jones, N. J. Dyer,

D. G. Kirkland, A. Kidd, W. G. Richards.

Mt. Joy, 1st Dist.—Elder R. Adkins, M. Shirey, Tho's Harris.

Bethabara—Elder L. B. Harbin, W. A. Edmonds, E. Awtry.

Mt. Moriah—W. H. Brasher, J. J. Deavors, P. M. Newton,*

Shady Grove—B. Willingham, J. W. Roberts, N. C. Collins,*
B. Gibson.*

Union F. C.—J. H. Wade, S. Hollingsworth, G. R. Wimberly.

Hopewell—G. S. Tucker, Elder A. M. King,* Wm. Brown.*

Mt. Olive—Elder B. V. Shirley, B. Hendrix, S. Stephens.

Providence—Wm. Randolph, W. Cobb,* J. Hanley,* C. Deason.* L. Williams, S. Covin,* W. Swindle,* S.

Walton.

Union W. C.—W. P. Smith, D. C. Manasco.*
 Mt. Joy, 2d Dist.—W. W. Davis,* Y. R. Amerson,* B. M. Kimbrel.

New Prospect—E. N. Kitchen, J. P. ..oony.

Mt. Carmel—W. M. Laird, I. Pate,* J. M. Hyche.*

Bethlehem—F. B. Appling,* V. P. Nuckols, J. F. McDuff, T. Willingham *

Pleasant Grove—Elder D. Manasco, Elder J. E. Cox,* J. Thomas,* J. M. Thomas,* W. F. Side, J. Rutledge,* W. Sides. John King.

Liberty Grove—J. B Ferguson, A. A. Sides, John Keeton.

Hermon—J. Oscar,* A. L. Brooks,* S. Ray.

Oak Grove—Jas. Hilton, W. Tucker,* A. F. Cole.*

Mt. Sinai—W. Kelly, T. Omerr , W. W. Johnson.

Shilo—Elder R. M. Atkins,* N. P. Grace,* T. L. Gabbert.

Sardis—D. Harper, A. Ward, Elder T. M. Martin,*

Corinth—Elder S. A. Smith, James McNeal, E. W. Wright.*

Samaria—Tho's Broach, D. H. Clifton,* W. Banks *

4 Proceeded to the election of officers, which resulted in the election of Elder L. B. Harbin, Moderator; A. F. Bell, Clerk; and Elder D. Manasco, Corresponding Secretary.

5. Invited visiting Ministers to seats with us.

6. opened a door for the admission of churches wishing to join the North River Association, when petitionary letters were presented by delegates from the following churches, viz:

Oak Grove—James Hilton, Winston county; Union—W. P. Smith, Winston county; Mt. Sinai—W. Kelly, T. Omerry, W. W. Johnson, Walker county; Corinth—Elder S. A. Smith, James McNeal, Walker county. The letters were read, the churches received, and the right hand of fellowship extended to the delegates, by the Moderator.

7 The following Committees were then appointed:

On arrangement of business, Elder J. C. Jones, R. Adkins, D. G. Kirkland, and on motion the Moderator and Clerk were added.

On documents, Elders B. V. Shirley, S. A. Smith, D. Manasco, James Hilton, W. A. Edmonds.

On preaching, J. King, J. F. McDuff, with Pastor and Deacon of Shepherd Church.

On finance, J. W. Roberts, A. M. Nuckols, V. P. Nuckols.

On deceased Ministers, Elder W. L. Jones, W. Randolph, M. Walters, M. Shirey, H. Yerby.

On nominations, B. Willingham, S. Walton, W. Sides.

On Sabbath Schools, A. M. Nuckols, Elders B. B. Smith, J.

J. Watts, R. Adkins, D. Manasco.

8. On motion, the committee on nominations were instructed to appoint some person or persons to write a circular letter and present at the next session for approval, and publication in the minutes.

9. On motion Elder D. Manasco was appointed to prepare a circular letter for publication in the minutes of the present session, and present to the Association on Monday next for approval.

10. Called for correspondence, when Elders C. Manly, J. J. Watts, E. Howell, J. Rushing, J. W. Carpenter, and brother C. Hestur, were received from the Tuscaloosa Association, and brother J. Shackelford from the Yellow Creek Association, with letters and minutes, to all of whom, the Moderator gave the right hand of fellowship, and invited them to seats with us.

11. The committee on preaching, reported the following arrangement, viz: Elders B. B. Smith and D. Manasco to preach to-night, prayer meeting to-morrow morning, to be conducted by Elder S. A. Smith.

12. Adjourned till 8 o'clock, Monday morning.

SUNDAY, Sept. 22d, 1867.

13. The Stand was occupied by Elder L. B. Harbin, who, preached to a large and attentive audience, from the 27th and 28th vs. of the 9th chap., of Heb.; and we trust with good effect.

MONDAY, Sept. 23d, 1867.

14. Met pursuant to adjournment, prayer by Elder B. B. Smith.

15. Called for the report of the committee on arrangement of business, received, read, adopted, and committee discharged.

16. Read the Constitution, Articles of Faith, and Rules of Docorum.

17. Called the roll, and marked absentees.

18. Returned correspondence as follows: To the Yellow Creek Association, Elders J. C. Jones, R. Adkins, W. L. Jones, N. J. Dyer, and D. G. Kirkland, messengers. To the Canaan Association, E. N. Kitchens, D. Manasco, James McNeal, messengers.

19. Read and approved corresponding letters.

20. Called for the report of the committee on Sabbath Schools, received, adopted and committee discharged. See Appendix A.

21. On motion of J. C. Jones, the Association adjourned to to hear brother C. Manly's discourse on Sabbath schools, the foundation of which, he took from the first paragraph in the

3d chap. of Exodus; in the course of which, he made many searching, melting, and impressive remarks upon the duties and obligations of parents in raising their children, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and the importance of Sabbath schools as being an auxiliary thereto.

MONDAY, 12 o'clock.

22. Met pursuant to adjournment.
23. On motion, agreed to propose correspondence with the Black Warrior Association, Jas. McNeal, L. B. Harbin, D. Manasco, S. A. Smith, B. V. Shirley, messengers.
24. Called for report of Book agent, and he just made a verbal report in substance as follows: That the few books on hand were on deposit for sale, in the hands of brother John Rutledge.
25. Called for report of District meetings. See Appendix, B.
26. Called for report of committee on documents, which was received, adopted, and committee discharged. See Appendix, C.
27. On motion appointed a select committee to prepare an answer to a query, sent up from the Mt. Joy church, consisting of brethren B. V. Shirley, J. C. Jones, A. M. Nuckols, C. Manley.
28. Called for circular letter, which was received, and by a resolution of thanks adopted and ordered to be printed in the minutes.
29. Called for report of committee on finance, read, adopted and committee discharged. See Appendix, D.
30. Called for Treasurers report. See Appendix, E.
31. Re-appointed A. F. Bell, Treasurer.
32. Report of select committee, read, adopted, and committee discharged. See appendix, F.
33. Called for report of committee on nominations, read, adopted, and committee discharged. See appendix, G.
34. Called for report of committee on deceased Ministers, read, adopted, and committee discharged. See appendix, H.
35. On motion, agreed to pay the Clerk ten dollars, for his services in superintending the printing of the minutes, and that he have as many copies printed, as the minute fund will procure, reserving fifteen copies, for each corresponding Association, and distribute the residue in *pro rata*, to the amount contributed by each church, to the minute fund.
36. Agreed to pay our corresponding messengers for their services, 72 cents per day, viz: L. B. Harbin, \$7 90, D. Manasco \$4 30, W. A. Edmonds \$3 60.
37. Appointed Elder J. C. Jones, distributing agent in the

first district; Elder D. Manasco in the second district.

38. The following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That the sincere thanks of the Association are due and are hereby tendered to Shepherd church and vicinity, for their kindness and hospitality to us during the session.

39. Agreed to pay Elder D. Manasco, in advance, for his contemplated services as corresponding messenger to the Canaan Association, and accordingly, the sum of \$4 75, was raised by voluntary contribution, and paid over to brother Manasco.

40. Read and approved the minutes of the present session.

41. Called the roll and re-marked absentees.

42. Adjourned to meet at Sardis church, Winston county, on Saturday before the fourth Sabbath in September next.

43. After singing and prayer by Elder R. Adkins, the brethren sung a hymn and took the parting hand.

Benediction by the Moderator.

L. B. HARBIN, Moderator.

A. F. BELL, Clerk.

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APPENDIX A.

We the committee on Sabbath schools, beg leave to report: That some of our churches having reported in their letters, that they have Sabbath schools, give evidence of an increasing interest on this subject, and we feel that we can not too highly commend them for the interest they have manifested on the subject. But we must say that there seems to be great deficiency in interest on the subject among our churches. And as we regard the Sabbath school as the nursery of the church, to a considerable extent. We feel that we cannot too strongly recommend to our churches the propriety of immediately organizing Sabbath schools, and of reporting their progress and and prosperity annually, in their letters to the Association.— It must be evident to all that the youth of our country are the hope of the future church, and every means that will have a tendency to qualify them for this end, ought to be encouraged and supported with all our energy and zeal. All of which is respectfully submitted.

A. M. NUCKOLS, Chairman.

P. S.—Feeling our inability to set forth the interest of this subject in a report of this kind, as its importance demands, we recommend that brother C. Manley be requested to deliver a discourse on this subject, on Monday, at 10 o'clock a. m., and that the Association adjourn to the stand, until after the delivery of the same.

APPENDIX B.

The meeting of the first District will be held with Union Church, Fayette county, commencing on Saturday before the third Sabbath in August, 1868. Elder B. V. Shirley to preach the introductory sermon, Elder J. C. Jones alternate. The following brethren were appointed to write essays on the following subjects, viz: Brother A. M. Nuckles, on the subject of "Piety;" Elder B. V. Shirley, on the subject of "Brotherly Love;" Elder L. B. Harbin, on the "Doctrine of Election."

Elder J. C. Jones, on the 'Final Perseverence of the Saints,' to be read at the next District meeting. Also, an opportunity was afforded to any brother or brethren, desirous of writing, to write essays, and to present as above designated.

The meeting of the 2d Dist., to be held with Pleasant Grove church, Walker county, commencing on Saturday before the second Sabbath in September, 1868; Elder D. Manasco to preach the introductory sermon, Elder R. M. Atkins, alternate. Elder B. B. Smith to preach on Sabbath at 11 o'clock, on a subject of his own choice; Elder J. E. Cox, alternate.

Appointed the next session of the Association to be held with Sardis church, Winston county, situate six miles northeast of A. J. Ingle's, who lives on the Byler road.

APPENDIX, G.

Elder D. Manasco, to preach the introductory sermon, S. A. Smith, alternate; B. B. Smith to preach on Sabbath at 11 o'clock, on a subject of his own choice, L. B. Harbin, alternate; Elder D. Manasco, to write the circular, (with the privilege of calling aid,) on the subject of 'Communion.'

B. WILLINGHAM Chairman.

APPENDIX, C.

The committee on Documents beg leave to report: After examining all the documents placed in our hands, we find the following query, sent up by our sister, the Mt. Joy church, viz: "Is it right for a Baptist church to receive evidence from the world, against a member of the church; when it co-operates with church evidence, and where two brethren differ in their statements and are equally credible," which we recommend to your consideration?

B. V. SHIRLEY, Chairman.

APPENDIX, D.

We your committee on Finance have received from the churches \$34 85 as minute fund, and \$25 90 as funds for associational purposes; making the sum total, of \$60 75, all of which is herewith transmitted. Respectfully submitted.

J. W. ROBERTS, Chairman.

APPENDIX, E.

The North River Association, by	\$27 70, M. F.
" " "	10 85, A. F.
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	38 05.

Dr. To Clerk services,	\$7 50
" " L. B. Harbin,	2 85
" " Printing Minutes,	27 70

\$38 05.

A. F. BELL, Treas.

APPENDIX, F.

The Querry submitted is: "Is it right for a Baptist church to receive evidence from the world against a member of the church if it co-operates with church evidence?" We reply, that in the case supposed, if the evidence of a man of the world be considered worthy of credit, *in itself considered*, it aught to be received as corroborative of the evidence of a member of the church; and where two brethren differ in their statements, and are equally credible, we should be obliged to receive as true the statement of the one with whom the testimony of the man of the world agrees. Respectfully submitted.

B. V. SHIRLEY, Chairman.

APPENDIX, H.

We your committee on deceased Ministers, beg leave to report: Brethren, we have abundant reason to be thankful to Almighty God, for preserving the lives of all our Ministers, during the past year; so far none have died, let us pray that He may long spare their lives, and also send more laborers into his vineyard. All of which is respectfully submitted,

W. L. JONES, Chairman.

Rec'd of A. F. Bell, Clerk, \$34 85, for printing five hundred copies of these minutes.

R. ALLEN SMITH.

Circular Letter.

In reference to the mutual duties of Pastors and Churches, and the care of the poor, the following thoughts are suggested:

It has pleased our Lord and Master, in carrying on the administration of grace, to commit the interests of His cause into the hands of His Church; who, by the very definition of the term, are "called out" from the world, and are intended to be as distinct from it, as the land is from the sea. In His church, thus called out and called together, He dwells by His Holy Spirit; and each member is expected to act as a witness for Christ, *as if he alone were His representative on earth.* Each individual christian is invested with responsibility which he can never devolve on any other person. And yet it is to be remarked, that from among the body of His people, the redeemer, by a special call, designates certain individuals to be peculiarly devoted to His service, and who are to be prominent among their brethren like the mountains are on the surface of the earth.

The scriptures teach, therefore, that there are some duties which all christians have equally to discharge, *because they are christians;* and that there are certain other duties which belong peculiarly to the relations which some sustain towards others of their brethren. Thus it is the duty of all christians, whether ministers or not, to pray, to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to be holy, to be diligent to make their calling and election sure, &c. &c. But ministers have duties peculiar to them, because of the relations they sustain to their brethren; and, on the other hand, the brethren have duties which they owe peculiarly towards those who are called to preach the word among them. To consider some of the leading duties, devolving on each, is the present object.

The relation of a Pastor to his people, and the duties growing out of this relation, are strikingly set forth in the Bible, under the figure of a shepherd and flock. Acts 20: 28; 1st Pet. 5: 2. And to understand the figure fully, it is important for us to remember the customs that prevailed in the East in reference to keeping sheep. They are much the same now that they were when our Saviour lived on the earth. A flock was not

with them, as with us, considered valuable merely for their flesh or wool; but they were the companions, to a great extent, of the shepherd, who was expected to devote his whole time to caring for them, and to peril even his life itself in defence of the weakest of his flock. See 1 Sam. 17: 34, 35; John 10: 11. In this way, a true shepherd was distinguished from a hireling—that is, one who worked simply for the pay he got. John 10: 12, 13. A shepherd's life was not, then, an easy one. See Gen. 31: 40; 1 Sam. 17: 34, 35. From his constant association with his flock, and his being exposed to all the dangers which threatened them, the shepherd knows all his sheep intimately, even to a name for each, and feels the deepest interest in them; and they get to know him and follow him wherever he goes. See John 10: 3, 14, 15. Hence, also, the shepherd *leads*, instead of *drives*, his flock. John 10: 4.

From all these we learn more clearly the duties of a Pastor. He is to take oversight of the flock, to identify himself with it, to be so intimate as to know something of the spiritual history of each one, and be able to feed each according as may be found necessary, to be ready to offer up his life, if need be, for their sake, and to remember that he must give account of each to the Chief Shepherd, when He shall appear. Acts 20: 17—35; 2 Tim. 4: 2; 2: 15; John 21: 15—17; Phil. 2: 17, 18; Col. 1: 28, 29; Heb. 13: 17; Isa. 40: 11; Ezek. 34: 11—16; 2 Cor. 12: 15. Even if one of his flock strays off, he is not freed from responsibility in regard to it; he must go after it till he find it and seek to bring it back. Math. 18: 12, 13.

From these passages of scripture, it will be readily seen how important and how arduous are the duties which devolve on every Pastor—*duties from which nothing can absolve him.*

“ ‘Tis not a cause of small import
The pastor's care demands;
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And filled a Saviour's hands.”

It is the highest honor, indeed, in this world, to be an ambassador for God; but the responsibilities are the greatest that can be laid on mortal man. 1 Tim. 1: 12; 2 Cor. 4: 1. No wonder that even an Apostle should cry out, “Who is sufficient for these things?” 2 Cor. 2: 16.

And now, brethren, private members of the churches, what think ye of these things? Have you no duties towards those who are thus charged with these momentous responsibilities? They are your brethren, and by your voice, as well as by the voice of God, they have been called out to this work. These ministers have not taken this office upon themselves, without your assent and encouragement. In a great measure, you are

responsible for their being where they are and what they are. And you have duties towards them, from which you cannot free yourselves. Among these are the following:

You ought to appreciate the work of your ministers—its importance and difficulty. Remember that they are but men—men like you are—just as feeble, as needy, as fallible, as tempted as desirous of sympathy, as any one of yourselves. Show them that you appreciate their work. 1st Thess. 5: 12.

Pray for them. If you see faults in them, even, pray for them, that God may give them grace to overcome them. A praying people will hold up the hands of their Pastor, when they would otherwise become weary and fall down. Your prayers, too, will open his mouth that he can speak to your profit. Exod. 17: 12; Rom. 15: 30; Eph. 6: 18, 19; 2 Thess. 3: 1, 2; Col. 4: 3; 1 Thess. 5: 25. Co-operate with them in their work. It is the same cause in which you labor, and which ought to be dearer to you than your own lives. Do not stand as far from them as you can, but come as near them as possible, and help them all that is in your power. Tell them of such as need special attention, and advise with them as to what is best to be done. And do not wait for them to do every thing; especially such things that you can do as well as they.

See to it that adequate provision is made for the supply of the temporal wants of himself and his family, that he may the more entirely devote himself to your spiritual interests. How can he give his whole time to your service, as is to be desired, unless he is relieved from the necessity of furnishing the necessaries of life for his family? It is true that there are circumstances in which it is plainly a preacher's duty to labor with his own hands for his support, preaching also as much as he can find time for;—as, for instance, where there are no brethren who can assist in his support, or where his own self-respect and usefulness requires it. Acts 18: 3, 4; 20: 34; 2 Cor. 11: 8—12. But the scriptures plainly teach that the rule is, that he that preaches the gospel should live of the gospel. See 1 Cor. 9: 1—14; 1 Tim. 5: 17, 18; 1 Thess. 2: 6.—The course of the Apostle Paul, in not receiving wages from the church at Corinth, for the special reason he gives, shows what he taught the churches as to their duty on this subject. 2 Cor. 11: 7—12; and 12: 13. The church at Macedonia, supported, in large part, the same Apostle while he was engaged in missionary work. Phil. 4: 10—19. And what he received from them for his support,—so far from being a stench in the nostrils of God, as some have asserted in reference to similar

cases,—he declares was “an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.” Phil 4: 18. The warning of the Apostle Peter, in 1 Pet. 5: 2, would have no force, unless it was customary in his day, for the Elders to receive support while engaged in the service of the flocks that were among them. And it is to be remarked that he did not advise them, in order to escape the temptation to which they were exposed, that they should decline to receive any compensation in their labor.

It would appear to be one of the duties of the Deacons to see that nothing shall be allowed to interfere with a minister’s devoting himself entirely to the spiritual welfare of his flock. See Acts 6: 3, 4, If this duty is dwelt on at greater length than either of the others, it is not because of its superior importance, but because there seems a necessity for showing that it is enjoined by the word of God.

In reference to the duty of providing for the poor, the word of God is equally plain. See Acts 20: 35; Gal. 2: 10; Luke 3: 10, 11; Rom. 12: 13; Gal. 6: 10; Mark 14: 6, 7; Rom. 15: 26; Matt. 25: 40. The principles of benevolence are fully discussed in the 8th and 9th chapters of 2d Corinthians. In conclusion, two passages of scripture are placed side by side, viz:—John 3: 17 and 1 Tim. 5: 8.—The former of these passages containing a question which must supersede the necessity of all argument; and the latter containing an important principle which is often overlooked, while the passage itself is frequently misapplied. It is generally referred to as teaching that a man is under imperative obligation to provide fully for the desires of his own family, before he does anything in the assistance of others or for the cause of benevolence. On the contrary, the connection of the passage makes it evident that it means, that a man who, being able to help them, will see his christian brother or sister in need, and especially will allow some of his own relatives to suffer or be supported by others, is unworthy of the name of believer in Jesus, and ought to be turned out of the church.

These statements are earnestly commended to the candid and prayerful attention of all our brethren—hoping that God will enable us to arouse to a sense of the duties which belong to each one of us. Respectfully submitted.

D. MANASCO.

Statistical Table for 1867

